

# ראש השנה ROSH HA-SHANAH



מַחֵר

## MACHAR

THE WASHINGTON CONGREGATION  
FOR SECULAR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

“In each era of ancient Jewish history festivals were created which were bound up with the ideas, the emotions, and the conceptions of the Jews of that particular era. It was not necessary to create new holidays. The old festivals were altered and re-created, a new spiritual content was poured into them and they became new institutions.”

Hayim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals*

## Welcome to Machar

Welcome! B'rukhim ha-ba'im! / בְּרוּכִים הַבָּאִים! / Sholem aleikhem! / שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם!

If this is your first time attending *Machar* or seeing this new *Rosh ha-Shanah* liturgy, you may find it helpful to read this page, which discusses our Secular Humanistic approach to blessings, liturgy, and ritual - an approach we hope you find meaningful and moving.

## On Blessings, Intentions, and Roots: Secular Humanistic Approaches

Each "blessing" in this celebration is a "new song," שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ / *shir chadash*. Each is a variation on an older form of expression, a "prayer," that spoke of theology and the supernatural. These new ceremonial words help us to articulate our ideals - with each other and to ourselves. These words are new green growth from our old roots. These are secular and humanistic expressions of Jewish values, spiritualities, and folkways.

There are many "blessings," בְּרָכוֹת / *b'rakhot*, in our ritual celebrations. These draw much inspiration from close readings of our old texts and rites. To utter a "blessing," a בְּרָכָה / *b'rakhah*, is to feel an "intention," כַּוְּנָה / *kavvanah*, to give something of ourselves, something of value, and using special signs to demonstrate the importance of the giving - such signs as wine and bread, fire and water, music and ceremonial objects. We used English and Hebrew alternatives to the word "bless" to convey the diverse meanings our congregation and movement connect to our ceremonial words and deeds. Thus, just as we bless, we acknowledge, appreciate, celebrate, cherish, elevate, honor, laud, lift up, raise up, recognize, rejoice, toast, and value the good we encounter in life. These statements and actions help us focus on the best of what we experience out in the world and the best intentions within our hearts, the everyday and the wonderful that sustain and give meaning to life, all of which move us and inspire us - to feel, think, and act in ways that help us actualize our highest values.

In this ceremony, our close readings of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic blessings revealed in each some intention, *kavvanah*, and linguistic roots, שְׂרָשִׁים / *shorashim*. We have cultivated and grown in new directions from such roots. To advance our journeys toward our ideals, we have re-envisioned elements of earlier blessings: origins and nature; heaven and earth; gender and embodiment; experiences of our interiors and our environments; as well as authority, privilege, and property. As we say each blessing, let us focus ourselves with *kavvanah*, intention. Let us renew both our appreciation of our present lives, and our desires and struggles for a better world for all. We hope you will join us in this journey, get to know us, and become a part of our community.

## On Transliterating Hebrew into English

In transliterating Hebrew to English no universal standard exists. The following transliteration scheme has been adopted:

- 1) ch for the letter cheit (as in Chanukkah), kh for khaf (as in barukh)  
- elsewhere both transliterated as ch,
- 2) f for the letter feh (as in shofar),
- 3) tz for tzadi (as in mitzvah), and
- 4) k for kuph (as in tikkun).

## MACHAR - ROSH HA-SHANAH

### ☆ Welcome - B'rukhim ha-Ba'im - הַבְּרוּכִים הַבָּאִים

*Leader:*

Welcome and happy new year! Shanah tovah! We have come together - as family and friends, as congregation members and visitors, as people of diverse heritages - to join others throughout the world in celebrating Rosh ha-Shanah, New Year's Day in the Hebrew calendar, and the anniversary of the world's creation according to the Talmud (*Rabbi Eliezer, Tractate Rosh Ha-Shanah 27a*).

All of us are here today because of our connection to the Jewish people through birth, choice, and association. As the first day of the Jewish year, Rosh ha-Shanah marks a turning point of hope between what was and what will be, between what is and what ought to be. We share with many a humanism that draws us together here in our common quest for moral self-assessment and self-correction. As one year ends and another begins, we gather to each reflect upon our words and deeds, and to renew our commitments and efforts to improve ourselves and our world, to fulfill our human potential.

*All:*

**We are here together today to celebrate another year of life and reflect on the year that is ending, on our milestones and our mistakes, our joys and our sorrows, on the lessons learned and the challenges and questions still to be faced.**

*Leader:*

Let us begin by singing a song wishing peace and well-being to one another.



### ☆ Hevenu Shalom Aleikhem - הַבְּאוּנוּ שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם

*("We Bring Greetings of Peace to You" - Traditional folksong.)*

**Hevenu shalom aleikhem!** (3x)

**Hevenu shalom, shalom, shalom aleikhem!** (*Repeat from beginning.*)

May all humanity come to greet each other with peace and goodwill.

*Leader:*

In most other festivals, the spirit is one of joy; yet Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur are imbued with a seriousness born of the sense of responsibility that each of us bears for our own life and ethical choices. These days are also different in that they are not nature festivals, nor do they commemorate an historical event. Rather they are observed respectively as the ceremonial beginning and ending points for a period of intensive reflection when we each confront the negative consequences of our mistakes and misdeeds as we strive to make amends and turn a new page in our lives. Let us support, challenge, and help empower one another to foster such improvement. Rosh Ha-Shanah is the Jewish New Year's day but, in contrast with the new years of other peoples, it is greeted with solemnity as well as revelry. As we begin our ceremony, we light these festival (and Sabbath) candles to illuminate our self-examination and to express our hopes for the future.

☆ **Lighting the Candles of (Shabbat and) the Holiday of Rosh ha-Shanah**  
**Hadlakat Nerot**

**Shel (Shabbat v'-shel) Rosh ha-Shanah**

הַדְּלָקָת נֵרוֹת  
שֶׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשֶׁל) רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

*All sing Humanistic Hebrew words to the traditional melody:*

**N'-varekh et ha-or**

נִבְרַךְ אֶת הָאוֹר

**k'-ot l'-khol she-tov ba-olam.**

כָּאוֹת לְכֹל שֶׁטוֹב בְּעוֹלָם.

**Nakdish et atzme-nu l'-chasadim**

נִקְדִּישׁ אֶת עֲצָמֵנוּ לְחֶסֶדִים

**u-v'-tzavta nadlik nerot**

וּבְצִוְתָא נִדְלִיק נֵרוֹת

**shel (Shabbat, v'-shel) yom tov.**

שֶׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשֶׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

*All:*

**Let us celebrate light as a symbol of all that is good in the world.**

**Let us dedicate ourselves to deeds of compassion**

**and together light the candles of (Shabbat and) Rosh Ha-Shanah.**

*(The candles are lit.)*

*Reader 1:*

Just as candles radiate warmth and illumination, so too may we.

Just as our forebears kindled such flames for themselves and us,

so too may we shine our lights for the present generations

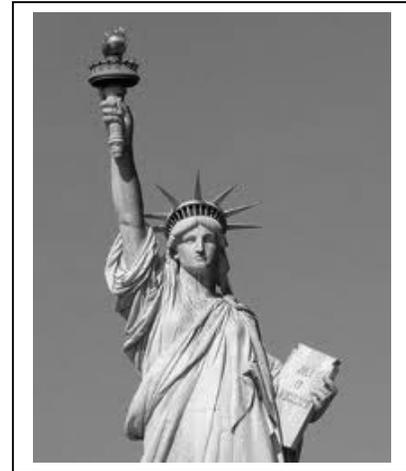
and those yet to come.

☆ **Ayfo Oree? - איפה אורי?** *Lyrics by Rabbi Sherwin Wine. Music by Abe and Micki Mandel.*

Ayfo oree? Oree bee.  
Ayfo tikva-tee? Tikva-tee bee.  
Ayfo kochee? Kochee bee,  
v'-gam bakh, v'-gam bakh. *(repeat last 2 lines)*

איפה אורי?  
איפה תקותי?  
איפה כחי?  
וגם בך, וגם בך.

Where is my light? My light is in me.  
Where is my hope? My hope is in me.  
Where is my strength? My strength is in me,  
and in you, and in you. *(repeat last 2 lines)*



☆ **Passing the Torch**

*Reader 2:*

Since ancient times, Jews have gathered together on this day,  
lit ceremonial fires, sang and recited liturgy, celebrated the new year,  
and reflected on their lives.

*Reader 3:*

Today we remember all the times that we came together during the year  
with family and friends, to light candles and sing. Together we remember  
times of joy and sorrow.

*Reader 4:*

Together we contemplate how to live better lives.  
Together we renew our covenant, our commitment to shared ideals.

*All:*

**These memories of the past and ideals of a better future  
help shape and give meaning to our lives.  
These memories and ideals link us with our forebears and heritage,  
and, we hope, with generations to come.**

*Leader:*

As we reflect on our good fortune to begin another year of life, let us say a  
She-Hecheyanu, a celebration of the new, the rare, and the wonderful.

☆ For All That Has Kept Us Alive - L'-Khol She-Hecheya-nu -  
לְכֹל שֶׁהַחַיֵּנוּ

*All read English translation of Hebrew below:*

Let us bless the goodness which we have encountered in the world,  
which has kept us alive and sustained us, and brought us to this moment.

*Traditional melody:*

N'-varekh et ha-tov  
asher pagash-nu ba-olam  
she-hecheya-nu v'-kiyy'ma-nu,  
v'-higgi'a-nu la-z'man ha-zeh. Amen.

נְבָרְךָ אֶת הַטּוֹב  
אֲשֶׁר פָּגַשְׁנוּ בְּעוֹלָם  
שֶׁהַחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ  
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוֹ הַזֶּה. אָמֵן.

☆ Celebrating the New Year

*Reader 1:*

Let us celebrate this Rosh ha-Shanah, this "head" of the new year,  
by being mindful of how we help create the world in which we live.

*Reader 2:*

Let us begin this new year by cleansing our hands and our hearts,  
by correcting our mistakes and making amends with those we have hurt.

*Reader 3:*

Let us value this day of celebration and reflection  
by striving to put our hearts into all we do, today and every day.

*Reader 4:*

Let us inaugurate this new year by being truly present and engaged,  
by reaching out to others, by lending a hand.

*All:*

Let us fill this new year with healing and growth, with joy and insight,  
with our efforts for the advancement of freedom, equity, and peace.

☆ A Humanistic Sh'ma - הוֹמָנִסְטִי "שְׁמַע"

**Affirming Human Diversity and Unity** (*Inspired by the "Sh'ma" - D'varim / Deuteronomy 6.4*)

*All able, please stand and sing to the traditional melody:*

Sh'ma Yisrael,  
im kol shonute-nu,  
kol ha-adam echad.  
Kula-nu na-avod

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל,  
עִם כָּל שׁוֹנוֹתֵינוּ,  
כָּל הָאָדָם אֶחָד.  
כָּלֵנוּ נַעֲבֹד

**l'-takken et ha-olam ha-zeh.**

**לְתַקֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.**

*All read:*

**Hear, O Israel, with all our diversity, all humanity is one.**

**Together let us all work to improve this world.**

*(Please be seated.)*

☆ **Let Us Love** *(English reading inspired by the "V'-Ahavta" - D'varim / Deuteronomy 6.5-9)*

*Reader 1:*

Let us encounter all the world with appreciative and insightful love,  
deep and healing love, liberating and joyful love.

Let us rejoice in love and in the fertility it brings to the human experience.

*All:*

**Love expands our abilities to explore and express ourselves.**

**Love deepens our feelings of connectedness and individuality.**

*Reader 2:*

Love helps us reach across the boundaries  
of ego, class, creed, ethnicity, and nation.

Love heightens our senses of meaning, beauty, and wonder.

*All:*

**Let us love all the world**

**with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might.**

*Reader 3:*

And these words will be upon our heart always.

Let us learn them by heart with our children, and let us speak them often -  
as we sit in our homes and walk along the way, as we lie down and rise up.

*All:*

**Let us attach them as a sign to guide our minds and our hands.**

**Let us write them on m'zuzot in our home as lessons.**

**Let us make our every deed a labor of love.**

*Reader 4:*

Let it be words of love that we speak and live by,  
not words of gossip, ill-will, or cruelty -  
not words of *lashon ha-ra*, the evil tongue.

☆ **Hinneh, Mah Tov!** ("Behold, How Good" - Adaptation\* of Psalm 133.1) **הִנֵּה, מַה־טוֹב!**

*Leader reads translation:*

**Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
when peoples\* dwell together in unity!**

*All sing together:*

**Hinneh, mah tov u-mah na'im**

**הִנֵּה, מַה־טוֹב וּמַה־נְּעִים**

**shevet ammim\* gam yachad!**

(\*Originally "brothers," achim / אחים.)

**שֵׁבֶת עַמִּים גַּם יַחַד!**

☆ **Amidah - עֲמִידָה** (Inspired by the "Amidah" blessings, Psalms 145.14 and 146.7-9, and Isaiah 6.3)

**"Standing" Up for and Acting On What We Believe In**

*Leader:*

Since the Temple stood in Jerusalem, Jews, in a "standing" position, *amidah*, have idealized qualities which they attributed to their ancestors and deity. All able, please stand together now to proclaim our shared ideals and our will to act upon them.

*All:*

**Let us remember those who have come before us,  
who have given us life, love, and our culture.**

*Leader:*

Such is our *zikkaron chasdei imot v'-avot* / זִכְרוֹן חַסְדֵי אֲמוֹת וְאָבוֹת,  
our remembrance of the kindness and merits of our mothers and fathers.

*All:*

**Let us work together in mutual aid to benefit all.**

*Leader:*

May we thus advance mutuality, *g'milut hasadim* / גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים -  
our best response to being parts of a vast and interdependent world.

*All:*

**Let us be thankful for all that sustains us,  
for all that gives us contentment and joy, compassion and understanding.**

*Leader:*

May our efforts help bring such well-being to all who live on earth.

All:

Let us work for peace, *shalom*, שָׁלוֹם -  
in our relationships, our communities, and our world.

Let us recognize and celebrate our differences  
to better live together on this one planet.

Let us work: to heal the sick and sustain health,  
to give to the weary strength and life renewed, to support those who have fallen,  
to uplift those bowed down, to free those in bondage,  
to abolish both greed and poverty, to repair and improve the world.

Leader:

Havah na-avod:

l'-rappe cholim u-l'-khalkel b'riut,  
la-tet la-ayef ko'ach v'-chayim m'-chudashim,  
lismokh noflim,  
lizkof k'fufim, l'-hatir asurim,  
l'-vattel gam betza v'-gam oni,  
l'-takken et ha-olam. (*Inspired by Psalms 145.14 and 146.7-9*)

(Please be seated.)

הָבָה נֶעְבֹּד:  
לְרַפֵּא חוֹלִים וּלְכַלֵּל בְּרִיאוֹת,  
לְתֵת לְעֵיף כֹּחַ וְחַיִּים מְחֻדָּשִׁים,  
לְסַמֹּךְ נוֹפְלִים,  
לְזַקוֹף כְּפוּפִים, לְהַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,  
לְבַטֵּל גַּם בְּצַע וְגַם עֲנִי,  
לְתַקֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם.

## Rosh ha-Shanah Additions to the Amidah

### ☆ U-N'tanneh Tokef - וּנְתַנֶּה תִּקְוָה

"Let Us Acknowledge the Power" of This Day to Remind Us  
That All Human Beings Are the Co-Authors of the "Book of Life"

Leader:

Rosh ha-Shanah heightens our awareness that each human action or inaction  
may have significance in what Jewish lore and liturgy call the "Book of Life" -  
*Sefer ha-chayim* - of which we are all together both authors and subjects.  
This mythic book is thus comprised of the totality of our human experience.

(*Talmud, Tractate Rosh ha-Shanah 16b*)

Reader 1:

This "Book of Life" is imagined to be our collective record of all our deeds -  
from best to worst and those in between. We celebrate all that are laudable,  
and we feel regret and anxiety over our mistakes and misdeeds:  
we fear that their consequences may haunt and shadow us,  
blocking our way to the better future we desire.

*Leader (reads beginning of the U-N'tanneh Tokef in Hebrew and English):*

U-n'tanneh tokef k'dushat ha-yom.

וּנְתַנֶּה תִּקְוָה קְדֻשַׁת הַיּוֹם.

Ki hu nora v'-ayom.

כִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִיּוֹם.

"Let us acknowledge the distinct power of this day.

For it is one of awe and angst."

*All:*

**Let us acknowledge the distinct power of this day to remind us  
that all human beings are together co-authors of the "Book of Life."**

*Reader 2:*

Yet, while we all miss the mark, go astray, often harming others and ourselves,  
we all are also able to make substantive change to counter the negative  
outcomes of our own mistakes and misdeeds.

*All:*

**Let us begin the new year by each listening  
to the "still small voice" of conscience within us.**

*(Hebrew phrase kol d'mamah dakkah in I Kings 19. 12; English phrase "still small voice" in Cowper and Byron)*

*Leader:*

U-v'-shofar gadol yittaka;

וּבְשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע.

v'-kol d'mamah dakkah yishama.

וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דְּקָה יִשְׁמַע.

*All:*

**"The great shofar will be sounded; the still small voice will be heard."**

**Having heard the call of conscience, let us engage in moral renewal.**

*Leader:*

At Rosh ha-Shanah we are mindful of how we each may engage ourselves  
in turning new pages in a "Book of Life" compiling humanity's good works.  
Jewish tradition, as summed up by the stark poetry of the *U-N'tanneh Tokef*,  
prescribes three ways of countering the negative consequences of our deeds:  
*t'shuvah*, *t'phillah*, and *tz'dakah*.

*Reader 3:*

*T'shuvah* here means answering for our wrongs, taking responsibility for them,  
and returning to the right path to reach our moral goals. The Hebrew word for  
"sin" or "transgression" is *chayt* - a term from archery referring to "missing"  
the mark or target, losing sight of the important things in life, and thus missing  
one's moral goals. The greater our good fortune, opportunities, and freedoms,  
the greater then is our responsibility for extending ourselves to assist others in  
need and for the improvement of the world, *tikkun ha-olam*.

**Reader 4:**

"...repentance is both a subjective change of heart and an objective change of social relations and conditions in community through right action. Atonement is not private and introspective only, but also public and outgoing. It is at-one-ment with humanity and... with that which is highest and best in history, in the universe."

*(Isaac Knox, from "An Ethical-Humanist View of Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur," 1961.)*

**Reader 1:**

"We must begin with ourselves, but not end with ourselves. Turning (*t'shuvah*) means something greater than repentance and acts of penance. It means that by the reversal of each person's whole being, those who had been lost in a maze of selfishness, find a way to ... fulfillment. Repentance can only be an incentive to such active reversal. Those who go on fretting about repentance, torturing themselves with the idea that acts of penance are not sufficient, withhold their best energies from the work of reversal. It is written: 'Turn from evil and do good' [*Psalms 34:15*]. If you have done wrong, counteract it by doing right."

*(Martin Buber)*

**All:**

**Let us "turn from wrong and do good; seek peace and pursue it."** (*Psalms 34:15*)

**Let us take responsibility for our lives and make *t'shuvah*.**

**Let us make paths that help us reach our moral goals.**

**Reader 2:**

*T'fillah* is commonly translated as "prayer," yet is also related to words for hope, imagination, seeking, examination, thought, decision, and judgment. Humanists may therefore interpret and value *t'fillah* as self-examination, introspection, soul-searching, as well as moral reckoning and accountability - all of which in Hebrew can also be called *cheshbon ha-nefesh*.

**All:**

**May our introspections help us renew our hopes  
for the improvement of ourselves and our world.**

**May our words of reflection today be the seeds of our deeds in the year ahead.**

**Reader 3:**

*Tz'dakah* is generous and magnanimous moral action for justice. Often translated as "charity," *tz'dakah* includes and transcends philanthropy. *Tz'dakah* at its best creates empowerment, cooperation, and equality.

All:

May we give generously of ourselves and our wherewithal to help bring about the better world of which we dream. May we “do what is right and just.” (Jeremiah 23.5)

Reader 4:

“...let justice roll forth like waters,  
and *tz'dakah* - moral action - like a stream ever-flowing.” (Amos 5.24)

Leader (reads the original Hebrew of the Bible passage above):

V'-yiggal ka-mayim mishpat,  
u-tz'dakah k'-nachal eitan.

וַיְגַל כַּמַּיִם מִשְׁפָּט,  
וַיִּצְדָּקָה כְּנַחַל אֵיתָן.

Leader:

May our ideals and hopes help guide and inspire our actions in the year ahead.

All:

Let us commit ourselves to such deeds in this world today and every day.  
Let us all be thus dedicated and appreciated, devoted and acknowledged.

Leader:

Nih'yeh kula-nu -  
kadosh u-k'doshah, k'doshim u-k'doshot.

נְהִיָּה כָּלֵנוּ -  
קָדוֹשׁ וּקְדוֹשָׁה, קְדוֹשִׁים וּקְדוֹשׁוֹת.

All:

Let us encounter each person as a precious presence, a sublime jewel of life.  
Let us thus see and feel, hear and smell,  
taste and celebrate the beauty of this world:  
All the Earth is full of merit and splendor, all beings full of worth and wonder.

Leader:

M'lo khol ha-Aretz kavod. (Inspired by Isaiah 6.3)

מְלֵא כָּל-הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹד.

Reader 1:

And thus, may we help all of humanity to become  
one fellowship with a heart at peace.



Leader (Hebrew below is Humanistic reframing  
of traditional liturgical passage above.):

U-v'-khen, na-azor kol enoshut l'-havvot  
aguddah echat b'-levav shalem.

וּבְכֵן נַעְזֹר כָּל-אָנוּשׁוֹת לְהוֹת  
אֶגְדָּה אַחַת בְּלֵבָב שָׁלֵם.

**Reader 2:**

"And thus, let us encourage hope,  
and let us work for the end of tyranny  
and for the growth of liberty and justice."

*Leader (reads the Hebrew of the Humanistic adaptation of the liturgical passage above):*

U-v'-khen, n'-ammetz tikvah  
v'-na'avod la-sof shel memshelet zadon  
u-l'-giddul cherut u-tz'dakah.

וּבְכֵן נְאֻמָּץ תִּקְוָה  
וְנַעֲבֹד לְסוֹף שֶׁל מְמִשְׁלֵת זָדוֹן  
וּלְגִדּוּל חֵרֹת וּצְדָקָה.

**All:**

And thus, let us renew our vision, our commitments and our efforts  
for the improvement of the world, for *tikkun ha-olam*.  
Let us recognize our short-comings and our potentials  
find contentment and joy in life as we work to live up to our ideals.

**Reader 3:**

As we begin this new year, let us appreciate all the goodness that we  
experience and create in this world, and let us work together to save this world  
for future generations.

☆ **“The Head of the Year”** by Marge Piercy (from *The Art of Blessing the Day*)

**Reader 4:**

The Moon is dark tonight, a new  
moon for a new year. It is  
hollow and hungers to be full.  
It is the black zero of beginning.

**Reader 1:**

Now you must void yourself  
of injuries, insults, incursions.  
Go with empty hands to those  
you have hurt and make amends.

**Reader 2:**

It is not too late. It is early  
and about to grow. Now  
is the time to do what you  
know you must and have feared  
to begin.

**Reader 3:**

Your face is dark  
too as you turn inward to face  
yourself, the hidden twin  
of all you must grow to be.

**Reader 4:**

Forgive the dead year. Forgive  
yourself. What will be wants  
to push through your fingers.  
The light you seek hides  
in your belly.

**Reader 1:**

The light you  
crave longs to stream from  
your eyes. You are the moon  
that will wax in new goodness.

☆ **“Turning of the World”** by Ruth Pelham (from *Earth Worm Disco*)

Let us sing this song for the turning of the world  
That we may turn as one.

With every voice, with every song, we will move this world along,  
And our lives will feel the echo of our turning.

With every voice, with every song, we will move this world along, (2x)  
And our lives will feel the echo of our turning.

*In following verses, for turning/turn, substitute:*

2) loving/love; and 3) healing/heal

☆ **The “Sovereignty” Verses - Malkhuyyot - מְלֻכּוּת**

*Reader 3:*

Humanity has long cherished enduring ideals of a just order transcending the misrule of tyrants and the sorrows that flow from our own misjudgment and misdirection.

*Reader 4:*

Rosh ha-Shanah is also called Yom ha-Din - יוֹם הַדִּין - "The Day of Judgment" (*Talmud, B'rakhot 12b*). We gather to observe this day as one dedicated to human self-examination, self-judgment, and self-correction. We make this season one of moral renewal as we begin the new year together by each of us acting as the author of our own becoming, and inscribing our hopefully ever-improving selves into a metaphorical Book of Life.

*Leader:*

Alei-nu - אֵלֵינוּ: It is upon us - it is our responsibility - together to cultivate and sustain progress in this world using our evolving capacities for human self-determination and harmony.

*All:*

**We here are connected with the peoples of all other lands,  
all the families of the Earth. Our lot is the same as theirs,  
thus we must stand together for equality, liberty, and peace.  
The highest value is in the breath of life; nothing is more precious.**

*Reader 1:*

"Man's plight would, indeed, be sad if he had to be kept in order through fear of punishment and hope of reward after death." (*Albert Einstein*)

**Reader 2:**

"Man must break his fetters which have chained him to the gates of heaven and hell, so that he can begin to fashion out of his reawakened and illumined consciousness a new world upon earth."

(Emma Goldman, *The Philosophy of Atheism*, 1916)

☆ **Tik'u ba-Shofar - "Sound the Shofar" - תִּקְעוּ בַּשּׁוֹפָר**

Tik'u ba-shofar,  
hashmi'u emet, hashmi'u binah.

תִּקְעוּ בַּשּׁוֹפָר,  
הַשְּׁמִיעוּ אֱמֶת, הַשְּׁמִיעוּ בִּינָה.

Tik'u ba-shofar,  
hashmi'u Torah, hashmi'u emet.

תִּקְעוּ בַּשּׁוֹפָר,  
הַשְּׁמִיעוּ תּוֹרָה, הַשְּׁמִיעוּ אֱמֶת.

*Translation:* "Sound the shofar, proclaim truth and understanding and Torah...."

☆ **T'kiat ha-Shofar - The Sounding of the Shofar - תְּקִיעַת הַשּׁוֹפָר**

**Leader:**

Let us now listen to the voice of the shofar.

Havah nishma kol shofar.

הִבֵּה נִשְׁמַע קוֹל שׁוֹפָר.

Alei-nu - עָלֵינוּ: It is upon us - it is our responsibility -

to strive to live up to these values. In each of us may our conscience, enlightened judgment, and commitment be roused:

by the shofar's sustained "blast" of *T'kiah* -

by the "broken" notes of *Sh'varim* -

by the staccato "alarm" of *T'ruah* -

and by yet another "blast of *T'kiah*.

תְּקִיעָה  
שְׁבָרִים  
תְּרוּעָה  
תְּקִיעָה.



## ☆ The “Remembrance” Verses - *Zikhronot* - זְכֵרוֹנוֹת

### *Reader 3:*

Today is also called *Yom ha-Zikkaron* - יוֹם הַזְּכוֹרוֹן - "The Day of Remembrance" (*Hebrew Bible, Leviticus 23:24*) Since antiquity this day has been a time for Jews and any who sojourn among them to remember both what is and what ought to be, both the real and the ideal, both their own words and deeds - good and bad - and the moral covenant in which they cooperate for the improvement of the world, *tikkun ha-olam*. Such remembering drives our moral reckoning as we feel the vast gap between our vision of what we should do and what we have actually done.

### *All:*

**Today and everyday let us remember and act upon  
our human solidarity, compassion, and ideals  
that constitute our covenant for a better world.**

### *Leader:*

May the shofar awaken us to be ever mindful of our expansive covenant  
which reaches from our forebears to us  
and on to the many generations yet born.

*T'kiah* - תְּקִיעָה;

*T'ruah* - תְּרוּעָה;

*T'kiah* - תְּקִיעָה.

## ☆ The "Trumpet" Verses - *Shofarot* - שׁוֹפָרוֹת

### *Reader 4:*

Rosh ha-Shanah is also called *Yom T'ruah* - יוֹם תְּרוּעָה - "The Day of Sounding" the Shofar (*Numbers 29:1*). The primal blasts of the ram's horn trumpet have for thousands of years proclaimed the cycles of the years and months, the inaugurations of war and peace, new rulers, decrees, and freedoms, as well as calls to conscience, hope, and action. Today the shofar can still help move us, if we but choose to be so moved.

### *Reader 1:*

"In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you will have a day of rest dedicated to the remembrance of your deeds with the sounding of the shofar, a special assembly." (*Leviticus 23.24*)

**Reader 2:**

"Sound on the new moon the shofar, on the full moon of our festival day." (Psalm 81:4)

**Reader 3:**

Like the thunder on the mountain, let the shofar sound.  
Like strings and drums, reeds and cymbals, let us hear the music of its call.  
(Exodus 19:16; Psalm 150)

**Leader:**

T'kiah - תְּקִיעָה;  
Sh'varim - שְׁבָרִים;  
T'kiah - תְּקִיעָה.

☆ **We Need Justice and Kindness**

**Tz'rikhim Anachnu Tz'dakah v'-Chesed - צְרִיכִים אֲנַחְנוּ צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד -**

*(Traditional melody of "Avi-nu Malke-nu;" words attributed to Rabbi Akiva in the Talmud, Taanit 25b.  
Humanistic version by Rabbi Sherwin Wine and Rabbi Binyamin Biber)*

Tz'rikhim anachnu	}	We need
l'-taher libbei-nu,	}(repeat first 2 lines)	to cleanse our hearts
ki ein ba-nu	(then sing next 2 lines)	for lacking among us
maspik ma'asim.		are enough good deeds.

T'hi ima-nu	}	Let there be among us
od tz'dakah v'-chesed,	}(repeat previous 2 lines)	more justice and kindness,
viy'shuah hadadit.	(sing last line; repeat from "T'hi")	and mutual aid.

צְרִיכִים אֲנַחְנוּ לְטָהָר לְבֵינֵנוּ כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ מְסַפִּיק מַעֲשִׂים.  
תְּהִי עִמָּנוּ צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד וְיִשׁוּעָה הַדְּדִית.

☆ **“Beginners”** by Denise Levertov

*Reader 4:*

We have only begun  
To imagine the fullness of life.  
How could we tire of hope?  
- So much is in bud.

*Reader 1:*

How can desire fail?  
- We have only begun  
To imagine justice and mercy,

*Reader 2:*

Only begun to envision  
How it might be  
To live as siblings  
    with beast and flower,  
Not as oppressors.

*Reader 3:*

Surely our river  
Cannot already be hastening  
Into the sea of non-being?

*Reader 4:*

Not yet, not yet -  
There is too much broken  
That must be mended,

*Reader 1:*

Too much hurt that we have done to  
each other  
That cannot yet be forgiven.

*Reader 2:*

We have only begun to know  
The power that is in us  
    if we would join  
Our solitudes in the communion  
    of struggle.

*Reader 3:*

So much is unfolding that must  
Complete its gesture.  
So much is in bud.

☆ **Thoughts on a New Year and New Life**

*Leader:*

"That life is both fleeting and uncertain is a truth that presses upon the mind with special force as the old year ends and the new begins. Time speeds on and we go with it, and though we have seen the year close, we can never be sure of seeing the end of the new. Since life is so fleeting and frail, we must begin the serious use of it at once, and begin it by entering upon the task of self-examination and self-ennoblement which is its essential preliminary. A new year, say the rabbis, should inaugurate new life." *(Rabbi Morris Joseph)*

☆ **“When I’m Gone”** *by Phil Ochs*

There’s no place in this world where I’ll belong, when I’m gone,  
And I won’t know the right from the wrong, when I’m gone,  
And you won’t find me singin’ on this song, when I’m gone,  
So I guess I’ll have to do it while I’m here.

Won’t see the golden of the sun, when I’m gone,  
And the evenings and the mornings will be one, when I’m gone,  
Can’t be singing louder than the guns, when I’m gone,  
So I guess I’ll have to do it while I’m here.

All my days won’t be dances of delight, when I’m gone,  
And the sands will be shifting from my sight, when I’m gone,  
Can’t add my name into the fight, when I’m gone,  
So I guess I’ll have to do it while I’m here.

And I won’t be laughing at the lies, when I’m gone,  
And I can’t question how or when or why, when I’m gone,  
Can’t live proud enough to die when I’m gone,  
So I guess I’ll have to do it, so I guess I’ll have to do it,  
So I guess we’ll have to do it while we’re here.

---

*Leader:*

Let us consider the limited time we have on earth and use it wisely.  
Let us create value in each of our days.

*All:*

**May we use with diligence and foresight our span of time.**

*Leader:*

May we cherish and steward the best legacies of generations past,  
and, through our own deeds, contribute to generations present and future.

*All:*

**Generation upon generation - *dor va-dor* - may we cultivate the virtues  
that shine forth the highest qualities of our shared humanity  
and elevate the human experience.**

**Reader 2:**

“There are those who now look back in complacency and indifference, who accept the fruits of the long journey but ignore the bitter costs of liberation and its lessons in tenacity and endurance. They are the strangers and the road passes them by. There are others who look back in gratitude and humility, who remember that few present blessings have been won without the sacrifices of the past, who continually re-evaluate the spiritual and cultural treasures that the travail of the journey has produced. These are the true heirs of the generations, and for them the long and agonizing journey has been worthwhile.” (Howard Sachar)

☆ **Mourner's Kaddish - *Kaddish Yatom*** - (“Dedication of an Orphan”) **קְדִישׁ יָתוֹם**

**Leader:**

As we now remember our loved ones - and so many others - who have died, let us recite together responsively an affirmation of our “dedication,” our *kaddish*, to life and its improvement. (Please rise, if you're able)

**All:**

**Let us recall each person of blessed memory in all their humanity, with all their strengths and limitations.**

**Let us honor and learn much from the best in the legacies of our loved ones past for the sake of all those who now live and for the sake of all those who will yet come to live in this world.**

**Thus let us stretch ourselves to reach for greatness and let us dedicate ourselves in the name of the living multitudes of this world.**

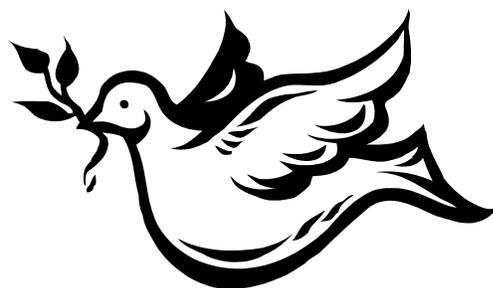
*Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English sentence above):*

Nit-gaddel v'-nit-kaddesh  
b'-shem ribbuyei ha-chaiyim ba-olam ha-zeh.

נִתְגַּדֵּל וְנִתְקַדֵּשׁ  
בְּשֵׁם רִבּוּיֵי הַחַיִּים בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

**All:**

**May it be our heart's desire  
to work for healing and equity,  
for freedom and peace -  
to cultivate these in our lives, and in our days,  
and in the lives of everyone in the world,  
swiftly and soon.**



*Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English passage above):*

T'he masat libbe-nu  
liph'ol l'-ma'an r'phuah v'-tzedek,  
cherut v'-shalom -  
l'-gaddel otam b'-chaiyei-nu, u-vime-i-nu,  
u-v'-chaiyei kulam ba-olam,  
b'-agala u-vizman kariv.  
V'-havah nomar: "Amen."

תְּהֵא מַשָּׂאת לִבֵּנוֹ  
לְפָעוֹל לְמַעַן רְפוּאָה וְצִדְקָה,  
לְחֵרוֹת וְשָׁלוֹם -  
לְגַדֵּל אוֹתָם בְּחַיֵּינוּ, וּבִימֵינוּ,  
וּבְחַיֵּי כָּלֶם בְּעוֹלָם,  
בְּעִגְלָא וּבְזִמַּן קָרִיב.  
וְהָבֵה נֹאמֵר, "אָמֵן."

All:

**And let us say: "Amen."**

אָמֵן.

**Let us bless and praise the memories of our loved ones with our actions.**

*Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the last English line above):*

N'-varekh u-n'-shabbe'ach otam.

נְבָרְךָ וְנִשְׁבַּח אוֹתָם.

All:

**Let us remember them in their glory and at their heights.**

*Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English sentence above):*

Nizkor otam

נִזְכּוֹר אוֹתָם

b'-tipheret u-v'-romemut she'lla-hem.

בְּתִפְרֵת וּבְרוֹמְמוֹת שְׁלֵהֶם.

All:

**May we carry on the best elements of their lives with splendor.**

*Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):*

Nissa b'-hadar.

נִשָּׂא בְהַדָּר.

All:

**May we ascend in the shining examples of their praiseworthy deeds.**

*Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):*

Na-aleh b'-divrei-hem l'-hallel.

נַעֲלֶה בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם לְהַלֵּל.

All:

**Even as we speak, we know that the value of each life exceeds all  
that can be expressed in blessings or in songs,  
in praises or in words of consolation.**

*Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):*

Kodesh ha-nephesh oleh min kol

קוֹדֵשׁ הַנְּפֹשׁ עוֹלָה מִן כָּל

b'rakhot o shirim, sh'vachim o nechamot.

בְּרָכוֹת אוֹ שִׁירִים, שְׁבָחִים אוֹ נְחֻמוֹת.

## ☆ Na'a seh Shalom - Let Us Make Peace - נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם

(Traditional melody for the song from the end of the Mourner's Kaddish, "Ya-aseh Shalom".)

*All sing:*

Na-aseh shalom ba-olam.

Na na-aseh shalom alei-nu,

v'-al kol Yisrael.

V'-nomar, nomar: "Amen."

Na-aseh shalom, na-aseh shalom -  
shalom alei-nu,

v'-al kol Yisrael.

Na-aseh shalom, na-aseh shalom -  
shalom alei-nu,

v'-al kol ha-olam. *(Repeat these last 6 lines once, the first 3 with a higher pitch)*

נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם,

נָא נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ,

וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,

וְנֹאמֵר, נֹאמֵר: "אָמֵן."

נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם, נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם,

שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ,

וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל,

נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם, נְעֻשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם,

שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ,

וְעַל כָּל הָעוֹלָם.

*All read translation:*

Let us make peace in the world. Peace is our responsibility,  
the responsibility of all the Jewish people, all of *Yisrael*,  
and the responsibility of all peoples in the world. Let there be peace for us all.

*Leader:*

Let us reach out to one another to help bring peace to those in grief and strife.

Let us care for each other wherever someone suffers loss.

We all need community as we encounter life's peaks and chasms.

Let us make our congregation a sanctuary of humanity,

a place to feel our pain and our joy together,

a space to plumb the depths of our souls and heal our wounds together,

a spiritual home where we share our poetry and songs,

our visions and labors of love. For those who mourn,

let us offer you an oasis of peace in this caring community.

For the ones we mourn, let us find lessons and inspiration in their legacies.

Let us remember righteous actions for blessing.

Nizkor tz'dakah liv'rakhah.

נִזְכוֹר צְדָקָה לְבִרְכָּה.

*All:*

**Amen.** *(Please be seated.)*

אָמֵן.



☆ **A Blessing**

*(Parents and  
Parents can)*

*Leader:*

Just as  
in the land  
and all

*All:*

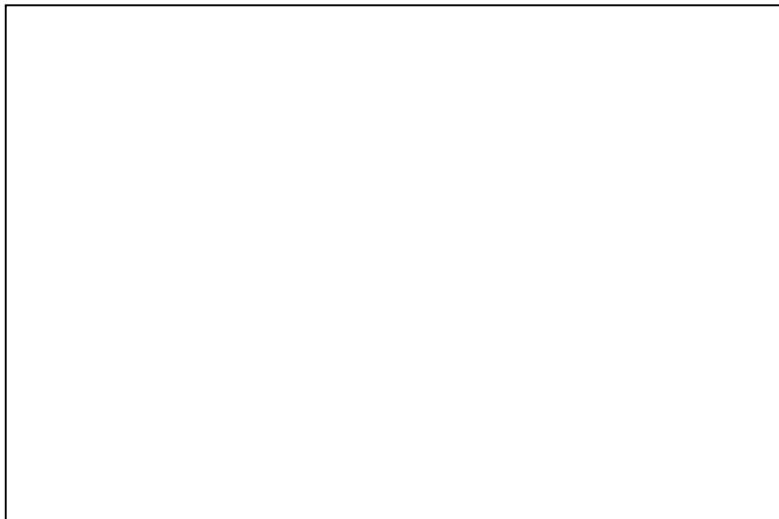
We bless you and watch over you with our love,  
and we hope that your learning and good deeds bring you joy and long life.  
May you help others and be an example to all,  
just as others help you and show you the paths of goodness.  
May the best within you shine forth with compassion,  
and may you always lift up your face to meet others in peace.

*Leader:*

As we hope for peace in the world, we must commit ourselves to working for peace. While force may sometimes be necessary to defend ourselves, we also know that violence and war are not able to solve humanity's problems, as they themselves are parts of our moral failings. Let us renew in our deeds the words of the ancient Hebrew prophets Isaiah and Micah, who taught that:

"Nation shall not raise up sword against nation,  
neither shall they any more learn war."

Like our more recent prophets Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, they taught that we must teach ourselves and our children new ways of resolving our differences and fairly sharing this one small world which gives life to us all. A song of peace written after the Six Day War of 1967 imagined a better year ahead in which the sounds of birds singing and children playing replace the din of war. Please now join in singing that song of peace "Ba-Shanah ha-Ba'ah."



*(Numbers 6.24-26)  
sent.  
his blessing.)*

rate the best  
r children



☆ "Ba-Shanah ha-Ba'ah" ("In the Year Coming") **בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה**

Lyrics by Ehud Manor. Music by Nurit Hirsch. Written the year after the Six Day War of 1967.

Ba-shanah ha-ba'ah neshev al ha-meerpeset,  
V'-neespor tzeeporeem nod'dot.  
Y'ladeem b'-chuf'shah y'sachaku tofeset  
Bein ha-bayit l'-vein ha-sadot.

בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה נִשְׁבַּע עַל הַמִּדְבָּר  
וְנִסְפָּר צְפָרִים נוֹדְדוֹת.  
יְלַדִּים בְּחוֹפְשָׁה יִשְׁחַקוּ תוֹכְסוֹת  
בֵּין הַבַּיִת לְבֵין הַשָּׂדוֹת.

Hebrew chorus:

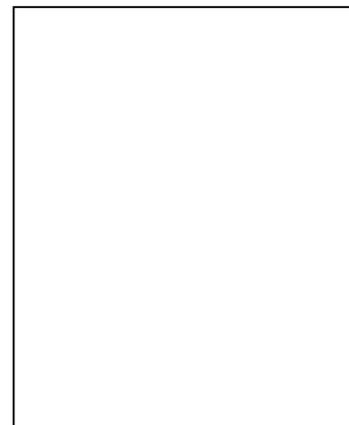
Od teereh, od teereh,  
ka-mah tov yeeh'yeh  
ba-shanah, ba-shanah ha-baah. (Repeat chorus, then continue.)

עוֹד תִּרְאֶה, עוֹד תִּרְאֶה,  
כַּמָּה טוֹב יִהְיֶה  
בְּשָׁנָה, בְּשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה.

Soon the day will arrive when all can live together,  
and no longer will we live in fear.  
And the children will play without wondering whether  
on that day dark new clouds will appear.

English chorus:

Wait and see, wait and see, what a world there will be,  
if we share, if we care, you and me.  
Wait and see, wait and see, what a world there will be,  
if we share, if we dare, you and me.



☆ Kiddush - "Dedication" to Being an Open and Caring Community - **קִדּוּשׁ**

Leader:

To conclude our ceremony we will now drink a toast to the new year,  
break bread together, and share apples and honey -  
all of which express our hopes for sharing a sweet and bountiful new year.  
First comes our toast - our *kiddush* - dedicated to the new year.

(Leader raises the wine to toast and begins:)

Wine: symbol of pleasure and sorrow,  
symbol of passion and the blood of life, symbol of plenty and of excess.

All:

Let us bless our lives and the new year by fostering community  
by sharing our joy, our spirit, and our bounty, by inviting visitors to join us,  
by welcoming the stranger, by caring for those in need.

Let us celebrate wine as a symbol of all that is good in the world.  
Let us drink a toast with the fruit of the vine: "To Life!"

*Traditional melody:*

N'-varekh et ha-yayin

k'-ot l'-khol she-tov ba-olam.

Nishteh et p'ri ha-gaphen: L'-chaiyim! *(Wine is sipped.)*

נִשְׁתֶּה אֶת פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן: לְחַיִּים!

*(Wine is sipped.)*



נְבָרֵךְ אֶת  
כָּאוֹת לְכֹל

## ☆ A Blessing for Breaking Bread

Let Us Bring Forth Food - Notzi Lechem - נוֹצִיא לֶחֶם

*(Inspired by "Ha-Motzi," meaning "the one who brings forth")*

*All:*

Each time we break bread,

let us commit ourselves to a covenant for a better world.

*Traditional melody:*

N'-varekh et ha-challah

k'-ot l'-khol she-tov ba-olam.

Notzi lechem min ha-aretz

she-kulam yokhlu.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַחֻלָּה  
כָּאוֹת לְכֹל שְׂטוֹב בְּעוֹלָם.  
נוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ  
שֶׁכֻּלָּם יֹאכְלוּ.

*All recite the translation of the Hebrew above:*

Let us celebrate challah as a symbol of all that is good in the world.

Let us bring forth food from the earth so that all may eat.

*(A symbolic pinch of challah is eaten.)*

## ☆ A Blessing over Apples and Honey

*Leader:*

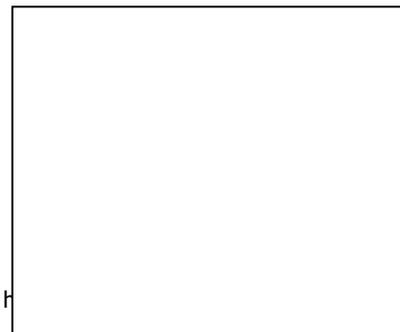
The apple's beauty, fragrance, and taste inspired ancient Jews to see it as a symbol of sensuality and the lust for life. The apple was also included in many Jewish legends as a symbol of good fortune and hope. The "honey" referred to in the Bible was a syrup made from fruit, and was the epitome of sweetness and desirability to the ancient Jews.

May our sweet apples and honey remind us to appreciate  
and find contentment in life's healthier pleasures.

*All:*

May the wholesomeness of this simple fare  
nourish our hope and our will to work  
for the improvement of our lives and our world.

*Leader:*



Livri'ut! B'-te'avon! / לְבִרְיאוֹתוֹ בְּתֵאֵבוֹן!

("To your health! Bon appetit!" Dip apples in honey and enjoy.)

## ☆ T'kiat ha-Shofar - The Sounding of the Shofar - תְּקִיעַת הַשּׁוֹפָר

*Leader:*

Let us now listen to the voice of the shofar.

Havah nishma kol shofar. הִבָּה נִשְׁמָע קוֹל שׁוֹפָר.

Like a banner lifted high, it hearkens all the world to action  
for peace and freedom and compassion (Isaiah 15:3).

*All:*

**Blow the shofar! Proclaim our search for understanding and healing!**

*Leader:* T'kiah - תְּקִיעָה

*All:*

**Blow the shofar! Proclaim our struggle for equity and freedom!**

*Leader:* Sh'varim - שְׁבָרִים

*All:*

**Blow the shofar! Proclaim our commitment to peace and the planet!**

*Leader:* T'ruah - תְּרוּעָה

*All:*

**May the shofar - which assembled ancient Israel  
in expectation of its challenges, fears and dreams -  
awaken each of us and draw us together  
to face our own in the coming year.**

**May we hear the shofar as our call to action!**

*Leader:* T'kiah G'dolah - תְּקִיעָה גְּדוּלָה

## ☆ Farewell!

*Leader:*

We have come together here today, as the Jewish new year begins, to  
reconnect with each other and the extended family that is the Jewish people.  
We have celebrated progressive values and teachings which help us guide our  
lives and which we treasure as our heritage.

*All:*

**We reflect on the imperative to improve ourselves and our community,  
our culture and our world. We are the stewards of a great legacy,  
and the trailblazers of a vital evolving civilization.**

We reflect on all that for which we feel grateful in life,  
and look forward to the new year.

*Leader:*

May we respond with courage, determination, and urgency to life's challenges  
and its promise. May our deeds help make the new year good and sweet.

L'-shanah tovah u-m'tukah! ("To a Good and Sweet Year!") לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה!

☆ Closing Song: L'-Shanah Tovah u-M'tukah! לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה!

## Happy New Year! Shanah Tovah! Gut Yor! Buen Anyu!

**MACHAR - THE WASHINGTON CONGREGATION FOR SECULAR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM**

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Any featured speaker/s during the ceremony can best be included: 1) before or after the song at the top of page 12, and/or 2) after the shofar is blown on page 15.

With other liturgies for Secular Humanistic Jews, this is available through the "Holidays" link on our website:  
[www.machar.org](http://www.machar.org) REVISED 2017